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173 century; about a generation later the Lepchas started living in permanent houses and were able to hold or increase their stock of domestic animals. Private property in land must have developed somewhat later; according to native tradition the land below the monastery—that is to say the more protected valley ground—has been divided into private property from time immemorial, but the higher ground was common property and was acquired and cleared as was wanted. At the time of Kahlyeu's father—that is to say about 1840—this ground too was divided up, and today all cultivatable ground is privately owned. Kahlyeu also said that until about 120 years ago only millet was cultivated, and not dry rice; but this seems to me improbable in view of the fact that the religious observances[8] are much more concerned with dry rice, than with millet or any other crop.

342 When new houses are made they are always built in the late autumn months, after the gathering of the harvest. This date is ●777 dictated by two reasons; at no other period would people have sufficient leisure and other dates would be ill-omened. The intending builder gathers materials for some months beforehand. The site of a new house is decided by a number of metaphysical considerations.

[779] First of all there is a lamaist book called Sachet Zai Putta which contains general rules of a very minute nature, indicating what sites are lucky, and what unlucky. This book is said to have been composed by four Gods who gathered together at Gyakar (perhaps Benares) to compile rules so that people should know which sites are good and which bad, which fruitful and which barren, where children can be born, and where they cannot. The following is a small selection of these very detailed regulations:

'A good site is, if there is a mountain to the south and below a slope. It is good if there is a stream on either side of the slope and trees in front. It is good if there is an outcrop of rock to the east and a flat plain to the west and a water fall opposite. Roads from east and north are good, but those from south and west should be avoided as they are used by Deut *moong* (fever devil). If there is a tree to the north directly below the house it should never be cut down; if, however, there is one to the south directly above it, it should be cut, or, if it be too big to cut down, a knife or some other piece of iron should be stuck into it. If the earth on which the

[8] See Chapter Nine. It is probable that millet was historically the earlier crop: what I question is the date of the introduction of dry rice.

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house is built is soft the house-mother will die. It is bad if there is not a hill between the north and the east because you will get the wind.

'*Choten* and *Mani* ('Mani walls' and prayer flags) should never be placed to the east or the inhabitants of the house will die, they should be on the north and west. It is good if the hill behind be covered with trees. It is bad to have a red cliff behind to the south; people born in the year of the Horse or the year of the Snake will be particularly troubled. (This can be averted by elaborate ceremonies.)

'It is bad if there is standing water below the house which will reflect the light; if there is, gold, silver and copper should be put in the water. It is bad if water seeps through the ground below the house, above it does not matter. It is bad if there is a cave to the north or west; for that would be the home of Mamoo *moong* (a malevolent female devil). It is bad to be below a pass between two hills, with a land slip below you, this is a devil's road. It is bad if there is a juniper tree (*sanden koong*) to the west, . . . etc.'

When an intending builder has chosen a site which fulfils these general desiderata, he has still to find out whether that site will be propitious for him personally. To do this he digs up a small piece of earth from the intended site, concentrating fixedly all the time on the question of whether the ground is good-omened or not, and takes it to a competent lama[9] who will then consult the book *Tong-yoop* and cast a horoscope to see if the site is suitable in relation to the intending builder's horoscope, reckoned by the various year-cycles.[10] If the first site chosen is not propitious others must be looked for until a suitable one is found. It consequently follows that all other considerations are secondary; it is better to be near a stream (for water for domestic use and also in case of fire) and to have suitable ground near for a field-garden, and, if possible, to be near friends and relations; but the verdict of the lamas comes first.

When the site is finally determined upon the lama carefully replaces the sample of earth, and then offers *cherkem*—that is mixed grains floating in strained *chi*—which is thrown on to the ground

[9] In Lingthem only Tafoor and the two Dorjé Lapoon knew how to cast this horoscope; the Lharibu Chujen of Panung was the only lama in the neighbourhood to possess or be able to read Sachet Zai Putta.

[10] See Chapter Seven, pp. 209–212) and Appendix III.

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girl's parents with Rs. 15 and a pig as 'soup money'; these gifts represent the price of the soup given as special food to nursing mothers. Should he want the child and not its mother he must pay for both the *thip-song* and the 'soup money'. If the father is unknown or refuses to acknowledge his responsibility the girl's family performs the ceremony; at the end of the ceremony a tree is designated as the child's father; a wooden phallus is stuck into the trunk and it is then spat on and otherwise insulted by all present. The tree is meant to wither after the child's birth.

It is a very great disgrace for a girl to produce a bastard, and it is believed that possibly some girls somewhere bear their bastards in field-houses or the forest and kill them rather than confess to the act. I could get no concrete instances of this and the idea of infanticide is so appalling to Lepchas that they will not even willingly entertain the idea of its being practised by strangers. There is no known method of avoiding conception and the only abortifacient believed in, and that very half-heartedly, is the bathing in hot sulphurous streams which are found some distance away in Zongu.

When a bastard is born there is no gathering of friends and relations for the birth feast on the third day and a lama will not come to the house to cast the child's horoscope; instead either the child's or the girl's father must visit him. Apart from this the child is treated normally. Should the girl marry later the child will stay with its maternal grandparents and will be brought up as their child; it will be considered as a member of their *pʏso*, and, if a boy, will have the same share in the heritable property as his maternal uncles. Although bearing a bastard is an act of the greatest shame, once it is over and done with no attempt is made to hide the matter or to hush it up. People will announce quite openly that they or their relations are bastards, or have born or begotten bastards; the shame situation has been successfully passed and is therefore no longer a cause for unpleasant feelings. Bastards are believed to suffer from one of three inherent weaknesses; either their mothers will die young, or their health will be bad, or they will suffer from goitre (three of the six supposed bastards of Lingthem have this complaint). Goitres are of two sorts; one of them is extremely lucky and productive of wealth and prosperity;[15]

[15] The seven men of Mayel (see Chapter Nine) who are the patrons of grain harvests are all said to have enormous goitres and as people sow the grain they murmur in prayer to them '*Ta-yoot thimbu : sambo thimbu*'—'May we have big goitres; may we have big harvests.'

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my figures may be incomplete on this subject; young children have little emotional importance for Lepchas and dead ones, other than the recently dead, may easily be forgotten.

On the figures available it seems doubtful if the Lepchas of Zongu will be able to maintain their numbers in the future. Out of a total population of 176 in Lingthem, there are twenty girls (who will probably marry outside the village) and ten boys under the age of ten and eighteen boys and eleven girls between the ages of eleven and twenty. At the other end of the scale there are thirty-seven people (or a fifth of the total population) aged fifty or over, including three men and one woman of over eighty.

The Lepchas account for the presence or absence of children chiefly as a matter of luck and the results of former incarnations; there is however a myth accounting for the relatively small size of the Lepcha family as compared with the Nepali; the Lepchas they say have only seven ancestral supernaturals,[18] the Nepalis twelve. I have no complete figures for any of the other villages in Zongu but such information as I received, and such observations as I was able to make, seem to indicate a similar situation throughout the whole reserve. I think the psychological reasons given by Rivers for the breakdown in fertility among the Melanesians, supposing them to be an adequate explanation of the situation there, are inapplicable in Zongu.

ix

Of the forty-one married couples in Lingthem (the other nineteen married women are either co-wives or widows) fifteen were childless in the spring of 1937. Eight of these couples were young people recently married, who still had hopes of bearing children; four of them were old people living alone who had no longer any hope of children; the remaining three had adopted boys. There are also six adult men in Lingthem who were adopted as children.

The arrangements for adopting a child[19] vary according to whether the child is the son of a near relation, of an unrelated person, or an orphan. With a nearly related person the adoption is conducted with little formality; the adopting parents present the real parents with a milch-cow and a new dress for the mother: these

[18] The people of Mayel: see Chapter Nine.

[19] The adopted child is called *kup-tsop*—substitute child—and the adopting parents are called *jiut-bo* and *jiut-mu*; the adopted child addresses them as *abo* and *amu*—father and mother.

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000 essential; according to the supernatural indicated the ceremony will be performed by a lama or Mun.

771 779 756 787 777 The following objects seen in dreams are lucky: gathering sand, collecting wood, seeing a woman with a big goitre: they foretell a good harvest; to put on new clothes or gather firewood or to have stones thrown at you mean the acquisition of property. Solid excreta indicate a good buckwheat harvest, liquid ones that the harvest will be destroyed by storms. To be covered with filth indicates coming wealth. To dream of climbing or going up hill is propitious. If you dream you are cut or are given silver it means that you will the next day be given a present of *chi*. The following objects are unlucky: a sick person lying down indicates a bad harvest: a tooth coming out means a relation will die, if from the right side of the mouth a paternal relation, if from the left a maternal; hair coming out or even combing hair also foretells death. A neighbour pounding rice foretells a death in his house. To dream of drinking foretells rain. A lake, swimming, or falling into water all foretell illness. A river foretells a message from the State authorities, agreeable if the water is clear, disagreeable if muddy. To dream that you are excreting in public means that your relations are slandering you. Being naked in a crowd foretells illness, as do dirty or ugly people. The setting sun foretells the death of kings. To dream of the dead foretells illness, to dream of a landslide, death, and also to dream of picking fungus. A dream of a red cloth or red flower means you will cut yourself, to dream of chicken's droppings means that some one is going to poison you. The list could be continued almost indefinitely.

756 771 779 787 Specially ominous dreams are: to dream of a kite or of men flying (this indicates the presence of Shook-sor *moong* and demands a ceremony by a Mun): to dream of fire (this indicates illness and also demands a ceremony by a Mun): to dream of a storm blowing into your house and lifting off the roof (this indicates that you are the object of malicious sorcery and lamas must perform ceremonies): to dream of going down hill carrying a load (this foretells illness; lamas and Mun can both avert it): to dream of a snake (this foretells danger and needs elaborate lamaist ceremonies); and so on. These specially ominous dreams are fortunately rare, for it would be considered dangerously rash to neglect the proper ceremonies. [824] For less strongly ill-omened dreams it is permissible to make a hole in a leaf of a special species of wild arum and spit through it; this will avert the danger.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

SEX, MARRIAGE AND MATURITY

i

On the question of attaining sexual maturity the Lepchas differentiate between men and women far more overtly than they do in any other phase of the life cycle. Theoretically they ignore physical puberty, have no word or words to express it, and pay no sort of formal attention to its arrival. With males the achievement of full sexual potency is considered to be a slow maturing process, taking place automatically over a period of years, with actual puberty marking, as it were, a half-way stage; though most boys produce emissions from about the age of fifteen, they are not considered to have achieved full potency till from three to five years later. With women, on the other hand, the physical signs of puberty—the beginning of menses and the swelling of the breasts—are believed only to occur through the external influence either of a man or of a supernatural named Kandoo *moong*. It is thought that normally a virgin girl will not menstruate nor will her breasts swell; these physical alterations only take place after copulation. It does, however, occasionally—though, it is thought, rarely—happen that a virgin starts menstruating; this indicates a visit of the supernatural Kandoo *moong*, and is considered to be a sign of good luck; some of the older women boasted that they had thus been signalled by this supernatural. The majority of women, however, depend on the intervention of a man; the physical signs will start whenever a girl experiences copulation, and there is therefore no stigma attached to grown men forcing little girls of nine or ten, and this does occur occasionally. It is possible that this cultural explanation of physiological processes masks a deep-seated male envy of the more conspicuous and dramatic life-giving functions of women and an attempt to make them appear dependent on male intervention. It would seem that this notion is at the base of the initiatory rites in many tribes of New Guinea and Australia, where

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husband for some months before he had assembled enough food for the ceremony. The ceremony only took place for one day instead of for two and the bride and her party went straight away on arrival into the house. The day before the marriage the bride withdrew to a village one day's walk away instead of to her own home which was three days away, where she met her bridal party. After the ceremony the post-nuptial visits were curtailed, but it was considered improper for the newly married couple to start living at home at once and so they spent a few days at the house of his 'nephew' Tingkep.

Early in the morning after the marriage feast the bride and groom, together with the bride's party and two friends of the groom to carry the heads and legs of the oxen, set out on a return visit to the bride's house. When they have arrived the groom stops as little time as possible; overnight if the bride's home is some way away, otherwise not even that. On that day all the guests who were present at the marriage feast return with gifts of crops or *chi*, which they give according to their wish and ability as a help towards the very considerable expense of the marriage feast.

Two weeks later the groom goes to fetch his bride again. Either at this visit or at the subsequent one the girl's father provides a feast for the newly married couple. When the bride and groom leave the girl's house her father sends back as a present to the man's father a load of *chi* and a load of rice. The couple then stop a week in the husband's house; at the end of that time they go back to the girl's house, taking with them as presents to the girl's parents from the groom's parents exactly the same presents as the girl herself had brought. The couple then spend a few days at the bride's home and then finally return to the groom's. At this final removal the girl brings with her such private property as she may possess in the shape of animals or harvested grain as well as her clothes and jewels.

Some time during the first year of marriage the bride may go to visit her parents with a present of a pig and they will in return give her a milch cow or a heifer. This does not always take place, usually only if the bride's parents are relatively rich.

If the horoscopes of the married pair are unfavourable or if ill-luck is foretold, this ill-luck can be temporarily averted in the following way: two lamas will make small millet images of the husband and wife called *parr-ko* and into these the lamas will transfer all the ill-luck which is foreseen in the sacred books. When

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this is done the husband and wife must each carry away their own image and throw it into the forest. The cost of this service is either Rs. 3 a head or enough grain for two months. This ceremony, however, only postpones the ill-luck for two or three years, after which it must be repeated.

As can be seen, these spaced visits are carefully arranged to make the bride's severance from her family as gentle as possible. It is only very exceptionally, as in the case of Nariya described above, that after the marriage ceremony the bride will refuse to return to her husband's house. It is also worth noting that until well after the ceremony the parents of the children being married play no rôle whatsoever.

The marriage feast represents very considerable expense—if everything had to be bought somewhere between Rs. 200 and Rs. 300; for most people this entails saving up for a couple of years. Nearly everybody who can provides this feast; in the case of very poor people general contributions will be made such as were outlined in Chapter Six.[7] In the case of a *komok myok*—that is a man living with his wife's family and taking the place of the non-existent son—the feast is very much smaller and is chiefly provided by the girl's family.

iv

The newly married girl is likely to find herself in a somewhat subservient position; it is her task to do the cooking and most of the household chores under the direction of the 'house mother', who is almost always her mother-in-law. She also has to maintain constantly respectful behaviour towards her father-in-law and the other men—her husband's elder brothers and her husband's father's brothers if they live in the house—who are so classified. If her husband is not the youngest brother she will only have this subservient position until the younger brothers marry; then their wives in their turn will occupy the position of youngest daughter-in-law and have to do the greater part of the household work. There is usually considerable friendliness between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law; the daughter-in-law is taking a lot of work off her mother-in-law's shoulders and in return the mother-in-law instructs her and cajoles her to keep her happy.

There is no bar on the girl paying relatively frequent visits to her parents; she need not necessarily be accompanied by her

[7] See Chapter Six, p. 156.

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and have found no reference to it in any of the books on that country. In view of the fact that the word is pure Tibetan, one would have expected to find it mentioned. Anyone witnessing the ceremony must have been struck by the peculiarities of the figure itself: but there has been no modern account of Tibetan social life, and it is possible that if any of the earlier travellers saw a Go-sum he may have considered it too shocking to describe! The ceremony is no longer carried out by Lepchas in the Kalimpong district, where missionary influence is strong, but is popular all over Sikkim, where it is held in great esteem by Lepchas and Tibetans alike.

Here is an example of treatment of a different kind. Chano's wife had been unwell for several weeks, but was suffering from no specific illness. Her husband, however, who was himself a Lama, thought there might be something wrong and asked Tafoor to work out a horoscope for the next few months. He did this in our presence; but in order to make it intelligible it is necessary to understand something of the chronological system current in Tibet, as it is used for indicating lucky and unlucky times as well as the times for much of the worship. Except in official correspondence with the outside world it is in use all over Sikkim.

"The Tibetan system of reckoning time, derived from China and India, is based upon the twelve-year and sixty-year cycles of Jupiter. The twelve-year cycle is used for short periods, and the particular year, as in the Chinese style, bears the name of one or other of the twelve cyclic animals:—

1 Mouse (Rat)	1912*	5 Dragon	1916	9 Monkey	1920
2 Ox	1913	6 Serpent	1917	10 Bird (Hen)	1921
3 Tiger	1914	7 Horse	1918	11 Dog	1922
4 Hare (Kite)	1915	8 Sheep	1919	12 Pig	1923,
					1935 and so on.

* The names of animals in brackets are Lepcha variants of the standard Tibetan years. The date opposite each is given as an example of one particular cycle.

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751 If she lives until after November she will in
755 future be lucky, especially should she engage in any form of
[777] trade. She will always have plenty to eat and drink and her later life will be "like a flower." It is clear, however, that some childless woman is covetous of her mother. At the present time she is listless; always in a hurry, and seems perhaps to pay no attention to her parents. This is because a demon has taken charge of her soul.

It is possible that the child may dream of corpses: also she may excrete and vomit blood, in which case she may have no desire for food. This, however, will be averted provided the treatment is carefully followed. The child will in any case suffer from coughs and colds during the next few months; but for this nothing can be done. They will not be dangerous.

793 Tafoor's fee for the consultation, at which the patient was
[466] not present, amounted to two rupees. The ceremonies, however, were much more expensive, but had not been completed by the time I left Lingtem.

793 We have already seen that in Sikkim the Lama functions
754 both as priest and doctor; but there is another side to his activities which may definitely be classified as magic or sorcery. This part of his work may best be considered under three separate headings: the causing of death, and sending of devils to cause harm; love magic; and finally, charms and spells.

754 The ability to cause the death of others is not apparently confined to Lamas and is occasionally carried out by laymen. The outward and visible sign of the ceremony consists in burning butter and incense over which copper has been scraped. A chicken must also be sacrificed and its blood offered to the demons. It is believed that by this means the selected demon gets a full stomach and will then do what is asked of it. It seemed so easy and simple a rite that I asked Tafoor if I could not do it myself; but "No," he said; "you have not been long in this country and the Mungs do not yet know who you are!"

Tafoor says that he has personally never sent a demon to

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[793] Tafoor does not himself stoop to the practice of love magic,
756 and I gather that it is considered beneath the dignity of any
932 Lama of position. It is much more commonly done by a Mun; and in this case the procedure is slightly different. A small portion of the hair of both the parties is again necessary. The Mun twists the pieces together, puts them into a clean plate in front of him, and concentrates and chants throughout one whole night. This is known as *Nangyong Hyok*. It is possible to have the ceremony done in order to seduce some other person's wife or husband, but is generally only resorted to when an already married couple do not get on well together. It is not unknown for parents to have the ceremony done on behalf of children when they marry; and especially is this the case in a *mariage de convenance*. Should a mistake be made, and the wrong hair given, nothing can be done to prevent or nullify the effect: the two people concerned will be bound to fall in love. I have often wondered what would happen should the hair of two men be mixed.

171 Love magic does not appear to be commonly practised in Tibet, for none of the books on Lamaism makes any mention of it. It is, however, very popular with most Hindus, particularly Brahmans, who are frequently in the habit of taking wives young enough to be their daughters. It is popular in all parts of Nepal, where Brahman influence is strong, and has, I imagine, been incorporated into Sikkim Lamaism through contact with the people of that country.

751 Amulets are called *Sung-Bo* or *Ka-Wo*, and are of many
● 777 different kinds. Some of these are Tibetan, others come from Nepal or Bhutan, but all are in common use by Lepchas.

Tse-Sung are amulets for prolonging life and warding off the dangers which threaten it, while *Rim-Sung* are worn only in times of epidemics. *Kunthup-Sung* are used to ward off all sorts of general evil. *Za-Sung* is a charm for epilepsy and is worn only by those who are afflicted by this disease, in order to prevent its attacks. *Sipaha* is an amulet worn by those

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who are going in an inauspicious direction, or who are forced to travel at an inauspicious time. *Palkyet-Sung* is an amulet of universal purpose and worn to increase one's general luck; while *Gyal-Sung* is a charm for warding off the evil influences of a special class of demons which are both inimical and useful to human beings, in proportion to the degree in which they are either propitiated or disregarded. These demons, which are believed to be the spirits of perverted Lamas, are said to cause nightmares, also diseases of the brain and nervous system. *Tshon-Sung* are "weapon-warders" and are usually worn only by warriors when going into battle. They are not therefore much used in Sikkim.

Amulets are usually made from a square piece of Sikkimese Daphne-bark (*Edgeworthia Gardneri*) paper. This is folded into a square and decorated with coloured thread, the inside being generally printed with various spells, usually the names of deities whose help it is wished to invoke. They are often Tibetan translations of Sanskrit spells. Other charms are inscribed with sacred letters and diagrams copied out of the Tibetan Tantric scriptures, and decorated on the outside with a row of figures representing the Lama's sceptre, together with a flame. The sacred diagram is generally placed in the centre of a circle round which are arranged a series of symbolic letters. These are usually in the form of either an eight-petalled lotus, a double triangle, or a pentagon.

The efficacy of these charms is firmly believed in by the illiterate Lepcha, but their exact allegorical meaning is understood only by Lamas; and even then only by few. But since openly to disbelieve in their power would amount almost to heresy, even indifferent believers accept and use them.

The *Sipaha*, however, is always believed in, and is generally made by an artist. It consists of a set of astrological diagrams together with invocations to the gods of wisdom and astrology, the commandments of Manjusri, and instructions to the spirits ruling over the elements, commanding them to cast no evil eye on the wearer of the charm.

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751 The *Za-Sung* is a strip of paper wrapped round a piece of
777 bamboo and covered with a coating of lac, on which are impressed nine zeros representing eyes. This charm is usually worn on a string round the neck.

[415] The *Tshon-Sung*, or "weapon-warder," is always worn in a *Ka-Wo*, or metal charm box. This is usually of plain silver or copper, but is sometimes decorated with gold filigree work.
[523] In this box are usually kept the most precious relics and religious heirlooms of the family. These usually consist of such things as the hairs of some holy Lama, his bones, teeth, or a portion of his clothing. Nail-parings also are in much demand. These things are considered so efficacious in affording protection against weapons that Tibetans and Bhutanese are often willing to pay very high prices for them, and will not part with them for any consideration unless they believe that they are haunted or have become attended by some evil spirit which is likely to cause their owner sickness.

The *Palkyet-Sung*, or amulet of universal purpose, is considered to be particularly efficacious in averting the evil influences of physical mesmerism, disagreement between married couples, and in maintaining harmony between them.

823 Gold and platinum are believed to be proof against all
783 forms of pollution, but it is not often that such expensive materials can be afforded. Copper comes next in order of merit, and is preferred to silver as being less liable to pollution. Silver boxes must be sanctified by sprinkling holy water over them every morning and fumigating them with incense; but this is unnecessary with boxes of any other metal.

844 For cases of childbirth, and also for various diseases of the
751 nervous system, there are charms written on a thin strip of paper with Chinese ink. These are rolled into a pill, coated with butter, and given to the patient to swallow. In cases of difficult labour they are tied to the hair of the mother, on the crown of her head, in the belief that this expedites delivery of

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It is very important that the site of a house be selected with 342
care, because on this depends the luck of the family: some 361
sites, for instance, will ensure large families, others none at 777
all. A site which has a small meadow in front and a hill behind, something like an Alp, is very good, as the hill behind may be used as a retreat. It is good if such a hill has a stream on either side; and there should also be trees all round. The site should slope gradually from back to front: it should be level on the west; and an outcrop of rocks on the east is good. It is particularly lucky if there is a waterfall directly in front. Roads leading to the site from the east and north are good; but those from west and south are bad, since devils come from these directions. There should be no trees on either side of the house, but only below. I pointed out to the Hlaribu that this last condition was almost impossible in a thickly forested place like Lingtem; but he only smiled and went on reading. If there is a large tree below, and immediately opposite the centre of the house, care must be taken that in no circumstances is it ever cut down; but a large tree similarly placed above and behind the house must always be felled. If it is too big for this it will suffice if a piece of iron, an old knife for instance, is stuck into it and left. If the earth on which the house is built is very soft this is a sure indication that the owner's wife will not live long; but it appears that a site cannot be selected with this end in view! It is bad if there are no hills between the north and east, because these give shelter from fierce winter winds. The door of a house should always face "the coming up of the sun"; but when I asked why the house adjacent to the monastery had its door facing west the Hlaribu would only say that "it does not really matter, but is better if it faces east."

It is not a good thing to build a house immediately beneath a pass; or on a site with a landslip below it. This is not for the more obvious reasons that will immediately occur [778]
to the reader, but because such spots are the favourite resting-places of devils. It is unlucky for those born in "snake" or "horse" years if there is a reddish cliff or hill

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342 361 behind the house; but for those born in "chicken" or "monkey" years a white cliff to the west of the site is good. ● 777 If, by any chance, a person of "snake" or "horse" year finds that he has inherited a house with a reddish cliff behind he [783] need not refuse to occupy it. It will be perfectly all right if he gets a Lama to prepare nine pots of water, into each of which he must put, respectively, a few scrapings of gold, silver, turquoise, iron, and various other metals. These pots must be wrapped in red, blue, and yellow cloth, tied up with black thread, and built into a prayer-wall either by the owner of the house or someone specially deputed by him. It is considered bad to have water below the house which reflects the glare of the sun; but if this is unavoidable, then gold, silver, and copper must be thrown into the pool concerned. It is not good if water seeps up through the ground immediately below the site; but apparently of no consequence if this should happen above. Nor is it good if there is a cave between west and north, as this would undoubtedly house a *Mamu* devil. A house should never be built immediately opposite the entrance to a valley, nor opposite any sort of crack or cleft. This would be most unlucky and would cause a rift in the family occupying the house. Unless absolutely unavoidable, a site should not be selected that lies between two hills, since this would certainly cause the owner of the house to be attacked by special devils which would cause him to commit various offences against the Sikkim state!

[312] The quality of the land surrounding the site is of no importance; nor is the proximity of drinking water. It is nice to have friends and relations fairly near; but these are minor considerations and of no importance in the first instance. In a country which has some of the finest scenery in the world it appears odd to us that the view is never considered. Some houses have, indeed, an unparalleled view of the mountains; but when the sites were selected this was a matter that never even entered the builders' heads.

If a householder wishes to put up chortens or prayer-walls,

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these should never be placed to the east of the house or the occupants will die: whenever possible they should be placed to the north. Inside the house, water must be stored on the north side; the fire-place should be on the west; and the grinding-mill should always stand on the north. I should add, however, that I hardly ever saw this arrangement carried out in any of the houses I entered, and the old Hlaribu said that it did not really matter.

Assuming that a site has been selected which does not too greatly contravene the above instructions, the Lama will visit it and make offerings to any spirits who might be disturbed by reason of the turning of the earth, or by the cutting down of trees with which to build the house. At the same time the original handful of earth, which the builder first took to the Lama, must be returned to the exact spot from which it was taken. After this the four corner-posts are set up, and the house may be completed without further disturbance. All houses, even temporary field-huts, must be built with at least two posts; and in no circumstances should a house ever be built in exact alignment with another.

As soon as the house is completed Lamas will come and perform the *Li Tashi* ceremony, which consists in offering rice and flowers; but this I never saw. In addition to the *Li Tashi* performed when the house is finished, this ceremony should be carried out, if possible, annually for the first three years. It is entirely optional whether it is done or not when a new floor is put down; but many people have the ceremony performed once every year as a matter of course. This, however, depends upon their means, since the necessary Lamas have to be paid and fed. Apart from the reading of holy books by four or five Lamas, the principal part of the ceremony consists of smearing the house pillars with a mixture of ox-blood, spirit, and butter by the Mandal. For this purpose an ox is sacrificed the day before, and its flesh offered to the gods and devils of the land on which the house stands, and to any spirits that might be dwelling in the planks

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When Jiroong carries out the ceremony at harvest time he must call in the same men who have celebrated to-day; otherwise it means bad luck. The actual harvest ceremony is best done before the reaping commences; but may, if necessary, be postponed. The eldest male living in each house must be the first to taste the new crops. He also offers a small portion to the gods. Should he be absent from home at the time of the harvest a little of the crops first reaped must be put aside pending his return. The seed for the next year's planting is generally selected by the senior woman of the house; but this is not essential and apparently has no significance, although it looks as though it may have originated in some sort of fertility rite. The woman who sings at the time of the planting ceremony (in this particular case Jiroong's sister) must also reap the first three handfuls of rice at harvest time: but, as usual—*Kyet manin!* The singing is done to please the gods.

At the time of the rice harvest, usually some time in early September (the actual day is co-ordinated throughout the district), everyone goes to the fields to dance. I was not present at this time of the year but arranged for a demonstration of the dances, the purpose of which is to separate the straw from the grain. There were about eight different changes of step, mostly various combinations of hopping and jumping, alternating with much stamping of feet. They are "physical jerks" more than dances, and are carried out with great vigour. A lady missionary told me on no account to miss this dancing, since it was "a very pretty and charming rite": what she omitted to tell me, however (and presumably did not know), was that the celebrations are carried on into the night. Anyone who takes part in the dancing must spend the whole of that night in the fields; and on this occasion what is sometimes referred to as "the greatest licence" prevails, the ordinary rules of conduct being completely disregarded. No reason could be given for this orgy; but it is, of course, a well-known fertility rite in many parts of the world.

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its blade can be seen in most of the photographs of women which illustrate this book, projecting from one side. There is no ceremony when a child is presented with its first knife or sickle.

Twins appear to be very infrequent, and there were none in Lingtem. It is thought, however, that identical twins are lucky, fraternal twins being unlucky unless the girl is born before the boy, in which case it does not greatly matter.

When a child cries it is immediately given the breast, even at night, and it is never at any time fed at regular intervals. It sleeps with its mother until it is about five or six, or until the arrival of another child. The youngest child is never weaned and generally sleeps with its parents until it is about twelve years of age. There is no doubt that this has a considerable psychological effect upon the child, for it is very easy to recognise the youngest of a family at all stages of its life. As children they are much more fractious than others, and in later life are inclined to be neurotic. I am aware that this is a generalisation and as such not to be taken too seriously; but nothing short of a prolonged investigation by a trained psychologist, carried out over a considerable number of years, would give evidence of scientific value. I am informed, however, by the Hon. Mary Scott, who has been doing missionary work with the people of the Eastern Himalayas for the past thirty years, that Lepcha girls, when the youngest member of their family, are almost invariably of loose morals. She attributes this—rightly, I think—to the fact that such children have nightly physical contact with their parents until a much later age than is normally the case. When this is suddenly denied them it seems the natural thing for them to seek some other form of bodily contact; and thus it comes about that young mothers of illegitimate children are very frequently themselves the youngest of their families; but the evidence is insufficient to know if the two states can be definitely correlated. I am inclined to think, however, that they can; but this is merely a personal opinion.

Should a baby that is still being breast-fed become ill its

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853 mother must take care not to go out in the sun, nor should
757 she sit down in any damp place. She should also give up eating salt and meat for the time being and it is better if she takes no *chi*. A diet consisting solely of rice and butter is considered the best at such a time.

856 There is nothing a mother can do to help her baby over the teething period, but it is considered better at such a time not to feed the child on frogs' or bears' flesh, or it will not talk until very late. The teeth should start to appear when the child is eight months old and should be complete by the end of the twelfth month; but if the child is seen by a pregnant woman its teeth will not appear until after that woman's child is born. For this reason pregnant women always take care not to look at other people's babies. The
[777 lower teeth of a boy should appear before the upper or the
842] child's luck will not be good: moreover, if the first child is a boy and its upper teeth appear first it means that the next child will be a girl. With girls the reverse applies; and in
[787] cases where their upper teeth do not appear first it means that in later life they will have trouble with domestic animals, and are likely to lose their husbands soon after marriage. Nothing can be done in cases of this sort, and parents generally conceal the fact that their children's teeth have appeared in the wrong order. It is a bad sign if a child of either sex has pointed milk-teeth in the lower jaw: this is a sure sign that the child will be naughty and disobedient.

856 A child is thought to become either "naughty" or "good"
577 at about the age of five or six; but its character is not finally
865 formed until about fifteen, or, in the case of a girl, not until
157 she gives birth to her first child. A "naughty" child is one who is unfriendly, who hits people, quarrels with its friends and throws stones at them; but the worst characteristic of "bad" children is that they will not co-operate with others. The domineering and strong-willed child with a mind of its own, which is looked upon with favour in our culture, would be quite out of place in Lepcha society, and would be definitely branded as "naughty." This is an excellent

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587 in Lingtem, is being married to-day. His first wife died a year ago, and he is now marrying a childless widow of twenty-four. It seems that in the eyes of the village he has struck lucky; for in normal circumstances it is not considered auspicious for a girl to marry a widower. In this particular case, however, the girl's deceased husband had no brothers; nor was anyone else entitled to inherit her, so the present arrangement suits both parties. The only fly in to-day's ointment is that the birth-signs of the bride and bridegroom are antagonistic; so much so, in fact, that many people think the marriage foredoomed to failure. Ongden, however, is quite well-off, and in any case, being himself a Lama, can probably obtain special terms from the faculty for the services which will restore the balance of ill-luck. But in view of the special circumstances both he and his bride think the risk worth taking.

587 273 We were summoned to the house at nine-thirty, but nothing much was happening when we arrived. We went first to the kitchen, where some thirty or forty people were sitting quietly soaking, after which we were shown into the altar-room, where the actual ceremony will take place. Six Lamas were sitting against the wall: they too were drinking. The second Dorje-Lopön appeared to be in charge, and the others all had instruments, the usual six-foot trumpets, clarionets and drums.

778 587 On the altar were a number of *tormas* of rice, decorated with dabs of coloured butter. Into these were stuck several rather crudely coloured pictures of gods, the centre one of which was said to represent Guru Rimpoche. Behind these one of the usual Tibetan pictures had been hung; but it was so old and tattered as to make its details unrecognisable. There was also a small brass vessel filled with holy water, into the neck of which a peacock's feather had been stuck; also a beer bottle, said to contain spirits. I also noticed a number of small bowls filled with rice and other grains, and several oranges and a heap of walnuts. In front of all was a row of small lamps, the last of which was only lighted when the bride arrived.